

CITY TRAVEL POLICY STATEMENT

PURPOSE

To set forth the policy for official City travel and to establish procedures for reimbursement of expenses incurred by City Council members, appointed officials, members of special boards, commissions, committees, and employees while traveling overnight on official City business. This policy shall not apply for commuter (local) training seminars and local City business expenses, nor is it intended to supersede P.O.S.T. reimbursable travel policies established by the State of California or the Newport Beach Police Department. The governing rule for all City travel expenses shall be availability, economy, convenience, and propriety.

TRAVEL POLICY

- A. The City shall provide reimbursement for expenses directly related to attendance at approved conferences, seminars, meetings, and other official functions/purposes.
- B. Official travel is planned, approved, budgeted, and controlled at the Department level, except in specific cases described below.
- C. Authorized travel approved in the annual budget requires no further approval beyond the departmental level. If, however, it becomes apparent that the total travel cost will exceed the budget estimate, the approval of the Administrative Services Director must be obtained. Variations greater than twenty percent shall be referred by the Administrative Services Director to the City Manager for approval. The number of attendees representing the City at any given conference (or other function requiring expenditure of travel funds) will not exceed the number specified in the budget without Council approval (in the case of commission members), or Department Head approval (in the case of City staff or committee members).
- D. Unbudgeted, unplanned travel requests shall be submitted by the Department Director to the Administrative Services Director who will forward the requests to the City Manager for approval. Such requests shall include the proposed funding source for the travel (other travel canceled, reprogramming of other funds within the department, etc.).

- E. Travel Expenses fall into two categories.
1. Those that are paid directly by the City or reimbursed to the traveler based on actual, itemized expenses. Lodging, airfare, rental car, fuel, parking fees, tolls, taxi-fares/local transportation, official telephone calls and conference registration fees fall into this category. Whenever practical, these expenses should be paid directly by the City. These itemized expenses shall be accompanied by receipts to obtain reimbursement.
 2. All other expenses shall be covered by the per diem payment. These expenses include meals, laundry, tips, and all other expenses not specifically itemized above.
- F. The City's per diem rate for Meals and Incidental Expense (M&IE) shall be equal to the U.S. General Services Administration's (GSA) M&IE rates. See www.GSA.gov for current rates. Travel days may be included in computing the requested per diem. If one or more meals are included as part of a conference registration, the M&IE rate should be reduced by the appropriate amount associated with the meals provided in proportion with the "M&IE Breakdown" as provided by the US GSA. The City Manager or Department Director may direct that travel expense reimbursement be at the actual cost of travel rather than the per diem rate when meals or other travel expenses are included as a part of the registration fee, or when other circumstances dictate such a decision, but in no instance shall the actual expense reimbursement for meals, etc. exceed the per diem rate. These itemized expenses shall be accompanied by receipts to obtain reimbursement. For appropriate events, the Department Director may further authorize travel at a reimbursement amount that is less than either full per diem or actual expenses. Travel of this type cannot be mandatory and is not to be authorized without the traveler's concurrence .
- G. Any reimbursement/cost offset from outside sources, such as P.O.S.T. reimbursements or airline discounts, are payable to the City.
- H. For local/short distance travel, City vehicles shall be used whenever practical. When personal vehicles are authorized and used, reimbursement will be at a flat rate as prescribed by Internal Revenue Service regulations.

- I. If personal vehicles are used for trips to more distant locations, the City will reimburse the traveler at the mileage rate or the standard discount/coach airfare rate, whichever is less. One day of travel time will be allowed each way, regardless of the mode of transportation. Travelers who request and are authorized to travel relatively long distances by personal vehicle rather than commercial air transportation must take leave to accommodate the additional travel time required. Regardless of the actual hours of travel, overtime will not be paid for said travel. Travel days that fall on weekends will not constitute overtime. Department Directors may authorize leave time at the travel site if requested.
- J. Travel advances up to 100% of confirmed airfare, lodging, registration expense and per diem are authorized. All other advances will be at the rate of 50% of estimated expenses. Requests for advances beyond this amount must be approved by the Administrative Services Director.
- K. Airline travel shall be at standard coach or comparable class. Lodging accommodations shall be at standard room, single occupancy rate. The governing rule shall be availability, economy, convenience, and propriety.
- L. Travel claims shall be submitted to the Administrative Services Director within ten working days of travel completion.

PROCEDURE

- A. Each Department Director shall include all planned trips in the Department's annual budget requests. The Travel Authorization Form shall be used as a planning/cost estimation guide. For unbudgeted, unplanned travel, the same form shall be prepared at the time travel is requested.
- B. All requests for travel advances shall include the original Travel Authorization Form signed by the Department Head.
- C. The Travel Expense Claim Form shall be used to file the final travel claim with the Administrative Services Director. A copy of the Travel Authorization Form must be attached.
- D. The Administrative Services Department shall make a record of all travel payments on the original Travel Authorization form, which will be returned to the traveler, with a copy retained by the City.

CONTINUITY OF CITY GOVERNMENT POLICY

With the advent of different modes of rapid transportation, there is the possibility of accidents injuring or killing several people simultaneously. Since Council Members are required to attend conferences, conventions and meetings outside City Hall, it is desirable to require that whenever possible, no more than three members of the City Council use the same transportation at the same time.

When it comes to the Council's attention that a conference, convention, or meeting in which transportation is required, Council Members shall make an effort to arrange their itinerary so that no more than three members of the City Council use the same transportation. The City Clerk shall be utilized to provide alternate travel arrangements where necessary in order to comply with this policy.

This policy will help insure that there will be a continuity of City government and that there is always a majority of Council members capable of fulfilling the responsibilities placed upon them by the City.

In addition, the City Manager, Department Heads and other key personnel should use the same guidelines in traveling separately on official business whenever practicable.

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